(c) whether the research benefits of publicly-funded computing institutions would be made shareable to all, by placing the same under the General Public Licence (GPL) or similar licences that do not restrict sharing of knowledge due to copyright restrictions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) Two more consultative meetings have been held since then for in-depth discussion on projects and policy positions to be taken-one within the Government and associated agencies and another with NGOs/Civil Society. Various related initiatives, as planned, under Linux India Initiative exercise are also being pursued.

(b) They are growing.

(c) Research benefits of publicly funded computing institutions are being shared wherever appropriate. For instance, Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) had added components relating to a number of Indian languages for Linux avaiable under General Public Licence (GPL) in September, 2003. Similarly, open office solutions have been provided for Indian languages under GPL developed by C-DAC, CollabCAD software developed by National Informatics Centre (NIC) package has also been put in a limited sharing mode within certain agencies of Government. C-DAC has also put its Indian fonts in public domain. Wherever appropriate, software developed under public funded efforts are being shared under GPL or similar licenses that do not restrict the sharing of knowledge due to copyright restrictions.

Availability of Sepectrum to operators

977. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been any exercise by Government or the TRAI, taking into account the commercial size of the Indian Telecom and IT market, for valuation of spectrum which could be made available to operators; and

(b) if so, the details thereof; if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The TRAI is making an exercise related to efficient utilization of spectrum, its pricing and allocation procedure for Indian Telecom and IT market.

Deadline for providing villages telephones

†978. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that December, 2002 was fixed as deadline by Government to achieve the target for providing telephones in all the villages of the country;

(b) whether it is also a fact that a condition to this effect was placed while giving licene for the telecom circle to the operators that the private operators would cover 60,000 villages;

(c) whether it is also a fact that private companies have been violating the instructions issued by Government time to time with regard to laying of telephone cables in the villages; and

(d) if so, what action has been taken by Government to see that the private operators follow the instructions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Six Basic Private Service Operators committed to provide 97806 Village Public Telephones as per the licence conditions signed in 1997-98.

(c) and (d) The Private Basic Service Operators could not fulfill the roll out conditions for providing village public telephones. The liquidated damages of Rs. 53.75 crores were recovered from these private basic operators for not fulfilling the roll out conditions and commencing services in time. Further these private basic service

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.